

the RARS ~~Exciter~~

Raleigh Amateur Radio Society



Worldwide Friendship

February 2000

Number 352

FCC Restructures Amateur Radio

In the last days of 1999, the FCC finally announced the restructuring changes that Hams have waited for all year. Reduced to the basics, here's what will happen, effective April 15, 2000:

There will be 3 classes of license:

**Technician
General
Amateur Extra**



The Technician license will be no-code. The code test for the General and Amateur Extra grades will be **5 wpm**.

Current Novice and Advanced class hams will be grandfathered - that is, they will be able to renew their licenses, and they will maintain their operating privileges, but no new Novice and Advanced licenses will be issued.

Tech Plus hams will see the "Plus" designation disappear next time they renew their licenses, and the **Tech Plus**

class will be eliminated completely. But current Tech Plus hams will maintain their HF privileges, and any old or new Tech passing the 5 wpm code test will receive the old Novice/Tech-Plus HF privileges. They will have to keep documentation showing they passed the 5 wpm code test, should the FCC request it.

There will be no "spectrum refarming" with this restructuring. All the sub-bands we currently have will remain in place for the grandfathered Novice, Tech Plus and Advanced Class hams. And nobody will be "automatically upgraded," although Technicians who were licensed before March 21, 1987 can apply for an upgrade to General without an additional exam (apply through local VEs at a regular exam session). Advanced Class hams will also gain the privilege of administering General Class tests in VE sessions.

Gary Pearce KN4AQ

continued on page 3

1st Annual SKYWARN Conference Kicks Off New Year

60 Amateurs/SKYWARN Spotters got up early on Saturday, January 8th, and headed out to the Sheraton Imperial in the RTP to attend the **First Annual Central Carolina SKYWARN Conference**, organized by SKYWARN EC Thomas Babb KF4JKQ. Meteorologists from the National Weather Service and area TV stations talked about the importance of the SKYWARN program to their operations.

The TV meteorologists all appreciate SKYWARN's contribution, noting that there is no substitute for real-time, ground-based observation. The WRAL and WTVD teams actively

continued on page 6

WFL-TV22 Meteorologist Steve Sweinckowski addresses hams attending the conference. More pictures on the back cover.



The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS), was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the Amateur Radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, RARS reincorporated and obtained 501(c)(3) Non-Profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friendship through Amateur Radio; to be of public service by providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic need; to educate members in radio technique and to assist in obtaining Amateur Radio licenses.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are \$18.00 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay \$5.00 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are \$12.00 per year. Dues for non-licensed Associate members are \$9.00 per year.

Officers

President	Jack Ritter WØUCE 846-1848 GIG38@aol.com
Vice-President	Tim Nicholson KF4RTX 501-7746 kf4rtx@arrl.net
Secretary	Jeff Wittich AC4ZO 362-9456 ac4zo@arrl.net
Treasurer	David Fix N4YTO 677-8320 dfix@pagesz.net
Exciter Editor	Gary Pearce KN4AQ 380-9944 kn4aq@arrl.net



Info

Repeaters:

145.13
146.64
224.64
444.525 (88.5 PL)
444.95 (88.5 PL)

Web Site:

<http://www.rars.org>

President's Corner

Jack Ritter WØUCE

Ever wondered why radio amateurs are called "HAMS"? Over the years there have been a number of explanations published. Here is just one version.

According to an article published in a 1959 edition of *Florida Skip Magazine*, the word HAM was first used in 1908 as the station call for one of the first amateur wireless stations. The station was operated by amateurs who formed the Harvard University Radio Club. They were ALBERT S. HYMAN, BOB ALMY, and POOGIE MURRAY. The trio first identified their station as "HYMAN-ALMY-MURRAY." Sending such a long name in Morse code soon became tiresome and called for revision.

They changed the station callsign to "HYALMU" using the first two letters from each of their names. Early in 1910 confusion resulted between signals from amateur wireless station "HYALMU" and a Mexican ship named "HYALMO." The Harvard station operators decided to use just the first letter of each from each of their names and the station call became HAM. Naturally this took place well before there was an FCC or government regulations regarding operation of a wireless radio stations.

In the pioneer days of unregulated radio, amateur operators selected their own operating frequency and call letters. Then, as now, some amateurs had better signals than fledgling commercial stations. Resulting interference came to the attention of congressional committees in Washington and Congress spent considerable time preparing proposed legislation designed to critically limit amateur radio activities.

In 1911, Albert Hyman selected the controversial **WIRELESS REGULATION BILL** as the topic for his thesis at Harvard. His professor insisted a copy be sent to Senator David I. Walsh, a member of the committee hearing the bill. The Senator was so impressed with Hyman's thesis he asked the young man to appear before the committee. Albert Hyman took the stand, and described how the small Harvard station was built. He almost came to tears while telling the crowded committee room if the bill passed, they would have to close the Harvard HAM station as they could not afford license fees or meet the requirements imposed on amateur station by the proposed legislation.

Congressional debate began on the **WIRELESS REGULATION BILL** and the word HAM unofficially became the symbol for amateur stations in the country crying to be saved from the menace and greed of big commercial stations that didn't want amateurs in the spectrum. The bill finally reached the floor of Congress and every speaker talked about the poor little station HAM. That's how it all started.

You will find the entire story is recorded in the Congressional Record. Nationwide publicity associated station HAM with amateur radio operators. From that day forward and probably to the end of radio as we know it, an amateur radio operator will be known as a "HAM".

continued on ROSTER Insert page 8

RESTRUCTURING *continued from page 1*

Finally, RACES station licenses will be phased out by not renewing them once they expire..

The 70 page Report and Order, adopted on December 22 and released on December 30, 1999, contained considerable comment from the Commission on its rationale for the decisions it made. Addressing what is probably the most controversial decision, the reduction of code requirements to just 5 wpm, the Commission wrote:

We are persuaded that because the amateur service is fundamentally a technical service, the emphasis on Morse code proficiency as a licensing requirement does not comport with the basis and purpose of the service. We note, moreover, that the design of modern communications systems, including personal communication services, satellite, fiber optic, and high definition television systems, are based on digital communication technologies. We also note that no communication system has been designed in many years that depends on hand-keyed telegraphy or the ability to receive messages in Morse code by ear... Given the changes that have occurred in communications in the last fifty years, we believe that reducing the emphasis on telegraphy proficiency as a licensing requirement will allow the amateur service to, as it has in the past, attract technically inclined persons, particularly the youth of our country, and encourage them to learn and to prepare themselves in the areas where the United States needs expertise.

The Commission makes the point that international radio regulations prevent them from eliminating a Morse code requirement for HF altogether. They didn't say that was their long-term goal.

Restructuring means **new exams and question pools**, and new instructional material. The new Tech and General tests will be 35 questions each, and the Amateur Extra test will be 50 questions. What those questions will be is currently being determined. The FCC is giving the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators considerable leeway in crafting new exam questions.

Before the restructuring goes into effect on April 15, hams have a chance to pass the "old" exams. Credit for those exam elements will continue to be effective for a year following the exam, and will apply toward the revised license classes. For example, an Advanced Class licensee can pass the Amateur Extra written exam today, and then apply for an upgrade after April 15th. A Tech Plus could pass a General Class exam today, and apply for the upgrade after April 15th.

Left for the future is the question of "refarming" the spectrum in the ham bands. Although this restructuring does simplify the license structure, it leaves in place a confusing mix of HF sub-bands for the grandfathered Novice and Advanced Class licensees. The ARRL had sought to reduce that complexity by completely eliminating the Novice and Tech Plus classes, upgrading both to General, and opening the Novice sub-bands for more general use. The FCC left the door open to another proceeding addressing a revision to the spectrum. ■

SKYWARN Spotter Training In Durham This Year

SKYWARN SPOTTER TRAINING will not be held at the February RARS meeting. The NWS is reducing the total number of training sessions, and spreading them around. Here's the latest word we've received on the next Triangle area session, from Orange County EC Dave Snyder W4SAR - Editor KN4AQ

My wife Karen, KD4YJZ, is collecting contact info from those interested in getting Skywarn spotter training. The session will be held in Durham in March or April, exact location is yet to be determined and depends on size of response.

If you wish to take this training please send me your name, callsign, telephone and e-mail address.



Dave Snyder W4SAR, Orange Co. EC
Efland, NC
919 644 8681
snyde006@mc.duke.edu



Wake County ARES Goals

Matt Sickles W2BYV
Wake County ARES EC

I thought it would be a good idea to get the ball rolling on some plans for Wake ARES that I have been working on.

1. Wake County Emergency Operations Center and Wake County Emergency Shelters

- 1.a. Appoint an assistant EC for Wake County dedicated to the Wake EOC
- 1.b. Conduct a once a month test of the radio equipment at the Wake EOC
- 1.c. Establish permanent antennas at each of the Wake County Shelters
- 1.d. Obtain equipment that may be deployed to each shelter for use during an event
- 1.e. Hold quarterly meetings with Wake EOC staff and Wake ARES leaders
- 1.f. Assess new equipment and antenna needs for Wake EOC
- 1.g. Update and Develop 2000 Wake EOC Operations Guide

2. Wake County Chapter of the American Red Cross

- 2.a. Appoint an assistant EC for Wake County dedicated to the Red Cross operations
- 2.b. Obtain a permanent radio for use at Wake ARC Chapter center in Raleigh
- 2.c. Test feed line and antenna on-site to evaluate condition

continued on Roster Insert page 8
RARS Exciter • February 2000 3

The Yaesu VX-5R

Joe Zobkiw WA2UZO

I hadn't really been looking for a new HT but then I saw the advertisement for the new Yaesu VX-5R. I've always been a Yaesu fan so I didn't have to be sold on the name, then the marketing folks sealed the deal. The copy read tri-band, 5 watts, ultra-wide receive, mil spec, durable (aluminum diecast case), lightweight, built-in weather frequencies, optional barometer – I was sold. When I found that I could get all of this for just a tad over \$300, I placed my order!

The VX-5R is a miniature tri-band FM transceiver with extensive receive coverage. The entire package is about as large as a pack of cigarettes and very solid. Besides 50, 144, and 440 MHz transceive operation, the unit receives AM (MF), FM broadcast, HF shortwave up to 16 MHz, VHF and UHF TV, VHF AM Aircraft, and a wide range of commercial and public safety frequencies.

The VX-5R is also feature-rich, including all of the standard features you would expect from an HT today including CTCSS encode/decode/scan, DCS, auto-repeater shift, 220 memories, multiple VFOs, memory groups, high-speed scanning, battery saving features, etc. It also contains Yaesu staples and unique features such as dual watch, ARTS (automatic range transponder system), ten autoscan weather channels, one-touch emergency channel, and the optional barometric pressure/altimeter/temperature unit. Another major selling point is the no-memory, long-lasting, charge-it-when-ever-you-want-to lithium-ion battery that comes standard.

I won't bore you with all the technical details of the radio since you can easily look those up on the Internet at Yaesu's web site at <http://www.yaesu.com/vx5r.html>. I will, however, tell you some of my experience with the rig.

The VX-5R solved many problems for me. First, it provided me with a way to explore 6-Meters. The innovative multi-section antenna allows me to quickly unscrew the 2m/440 nub and replace it with the three-times longer 6-Meter nub. In no time I am communicating with 5w on 6m.

Secondly, it allowed me to replace my handheld scanner. With 220 memories I was able to quickly enter and label all of the local repeaters as well as important public service frequencies. Using up to 10 memory groups I can quickly and easily scan only the 2m repeaters, or city police, or all ham memories, or any combination. The ability to configure this radio to your specific needs is second to none.

The VX-5R has four output power levels: 300mw, 1w, 2.5w, and 5w (4.5w on 440). One of the nicest features of the radio is that there is *one button* that, when pressed, toggles between the output power levels. No fumbling with menus! Each memory can also store its own power level.

Skywarn spotters hear this! The VX-5R has *one button* access to NOAA weather radio, up to 10 frequencies. The optional barometric pressure unit is also a useful feature. This wafer-thin card is user-installed behind the battery case and automatically calculates barometric pressure, altitude, and temperature (inside the unit). Each reading is one button push away and can be displayed indefinitely, even when the radio is turned off! In fact, if left displayed, the barometer readings will be taken every 30 minutes and will create a graph of the trend over time.

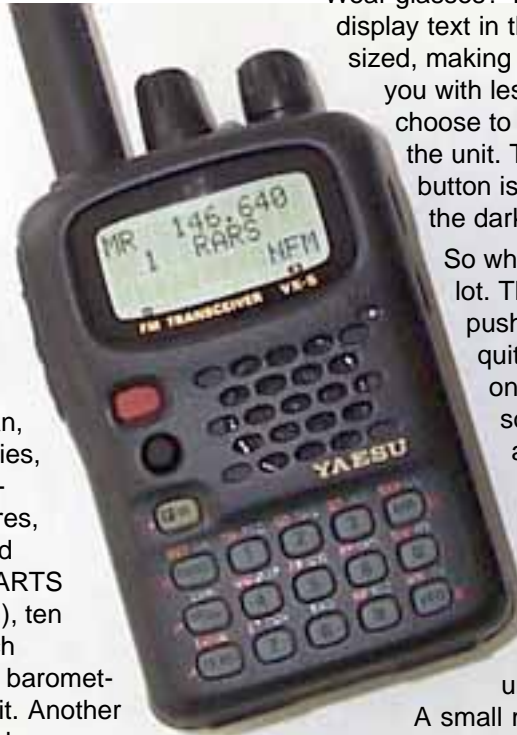
Wear glasses? The display on the VX-5R can be set to display text in the normal small 7 pixel size or double-sized, making frequency readout easier for those of you with less than perfect vision. You can also choose to display icons in place of text throughout the unit. The clear orange glow, when the lamp button is pressed, makes the unit very usable in the dark.

So what's wrong with the radio? Not a whole lot. There are a couple of strange button pushes but primarily the functionality is quite easy to understand once you do it once. My only other complaint is that the soft case has an outline for a hole but no actual hole to access the microphone/earphone and power jacks. I easily fixed this with an *Exacto* knife and the case is no worse for the wear. It's almost like they just forget to pop the hole in there.

Lastly, two knobs on the top of the unit allow volume control and data entry.

A small multi-colored transmit/receive LED is also located there.

When I purchased my VX-5R I didn't know anyone else who had one. Lately, listening to the local repeaters, it seems handfuls of folks are purchasing them. If you are searching for a small, powerful HT that will perform as well in the backyard as in public service, the Yaesu VX-5R deserves a serious look. ■



**Check Into the RARS
10 Meter Net
8:30 pm Wednesday
28.364 MHz USB**

RARSFest 2000

North Carolina State
ARRL Convention

Hamfest & Computer Fair

Sunday, April 9th, 2000
8:00 am to 4:00 pm

featuring FCC's
Riley Hollingsworth

RARSfest 2000 is Coming!

It's hard to believe *Cyndi Pearce KD4ACW*
but it's almost that time again! *RARSfest Chair*
Time for RARSfest 2000! *Tim Nicholson KF4RTX*

Preparations have been underway since *Co-Chair*
October and we are getting down to the final count down to
April 9th. The flyers have been printed and will be heading
to the Post Office the middle of February.

How can you help with the Hamfest. There are plenty of
possibilities: Ticket Sales, Setup, Teardown, Talk-In,
Security, Stage, RARS Table and the Social. Sound fun?!?!
Then contact one of the nice people below and let them
know you are interested in helping out.

A Hamfest Information/Training session will be held at the
regular RARS meeting on April 4th. We will have sign up
sheets for each area at the monthly meetings starting in
February.

Setup	Bernard Blackmon KC4UPX 467-8719, bernardb@mindspring.com
Stage	Gary Pearce KN4AQ 380-9944, kn4aq@arrl.net
Tickets	Alan Plaks KA4NSA 562-6859, asplaks@mindspring.com
Comm Center	David Fix N4YTO 677-8320, dfix@pagesz.net
Security	Volunteer Needed!
Teardown	Dave Thomas K4SAN 772-6338, k4san@ipass.net
RARS Table	Max Bloodworth KO4TV 787-0758, ko4tv@juno.com
Social	Mary Jo Littlewood 872-6555
Contests	Rick Merkle KA3PSK 835-0970, ramerk@us.ibm.com ■

Wake County ARES continued from page 2

- 2.d. Conduct a bi-monthly test of the radio equipment at the Wake ARC Chapter
- 2.e. Update and Develop 2000 Wake ARC Operations Guide for Chapter and Shelters
3. **State of North Carolina Emergency Operations Center**
 - 3.a. Appoint an assistant EC for Wake County dedicated to the State EOC
 - 3.b. Obtain training and permission to use high-powered Harris radio for HF comm.
 - 3.c. Conduct a bi-monthly test of the radio equipment at the State EOC
 - 3.d. Install APRS software for permanent operation at State EOC
 - 3.e. Obtain headsets for use on State EOC equipment for long-duration operations
 - 3.f. Update and Develop 2000 State EOC Operations Guide

I would like to receive an e-mail or phone call from individuals who are interested in becoming AEC's of Wake County with the roles of State EOC coordinator, Wake EOC coordinator and American Red Cross coordinator. I learned in 1999 that I cannot plan and take care of Wake County ARES activities on my own. I also would like some suggestions from operators on how we can establish a better deployment mechanism when operators are needed for an event. This has proved to be the most crucial task.

Starting on February 01, 2000 we will be running ARES training nets. I am working on the logistical issues for an operating frequency and permission this week, so any assistance is appreciated. I would like for these nets to run monthly and contain some information related to emergency communications. This may prove to be such a great idea that we start meeting in Wake County once a month for dinner and a quick speaker.

Please remember, that Wake County ARES events cannot be done by one person or one group, we need widespread involvement to make it successful. ■

President's Corner continued from page 2

Want to learn more about the history of this intriguing hobby? Ask one of your fellow RARS members, "you know," some of us with gray hair and original calls starting with W or K followed by a call district number about the early days of radio. You may also want to learn about organizations within the fraternity such as the Quarter Century Wireless Association, Old Timers Club, Old, Old Timers Club or the Society of Wireless Pioneers. As a member of all four organizations I assure you there are interesting facts, personal experiences and history available for the asking. KN4AQ has researched this particular subject and can provide other sources of reference some of which are on the web. 73 fellow "HAMS." ■

Section Manager Election Underway - Candidates Respond to RARS Exciter Questions

ARRL members in the North Carolina Section received their ballots in early January.

The ballots are due back at ARRL HQ by February 17th. The two candidates are **Roger Allen KD4MYE**, from Youngsville, and **John Covington W4CC**, from Charlotte. I sent each candidate a list of questions suggested by club members on the RARS e-mail server. I received a reply to the questions from John W4CC. Roger KD4MYE did not reply. To be as fair as possible, I'm including some information from Roger's web page that covers some of the topics.

Gary Pearce KN4AQ
Editor

What are the two or three most important parts of the SM's job?

1. Appointing the section cabinet. Each of these appointees manages an important part of our Field Organization, so it is important that the Section Manager recruits the best people possible to fill each position.

2. Representing the League and Amateur Radio to the non-ham public. As the only elected official in the Field Organization, the SM will occasionally be called upon to meet with or speak to non-hams about what we do.

3. Representing the League to the ham radio community. The SM should present a positive image of the Field Organization and encourage all amateurs to participate. The SM should be a leader most of all. He should be someone that people trust, is accessible, and provides a sense of direction to the Field Organization.

What makes you the best candidate to fill that job?

Serving as President of the Mecklenburg ARS for two years required me to spend much time representing Amateur Radio to both the public and to other hams. I also had to recruit volunteers to fill important positions within the club. The SM needs both of these skills.

The SM will also need to be comfortable working with hams across this great state. Being NC ARRL Affiliated Club Coordinator since 1997 has given me an opportunity to work with radio clubs on a statewide basis.

Describe a few things that are going well in the NC Section.

Our Field Organization has been ready and willing to help out during recent disasters. This was most thoroughly demonstrated during the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd. We had hundreds of volunteers who assisted during this disaster, and our contributions were favorably recognized by the agencies we served. I think this speaks well of the Field Organization at all levels, and shows we have been improving our skills.

The Affiliated Club program has seen five new Special Service clubs in the last few years.

The NC Section web page and e-mail reflector allows us to communicate with more hams than ever before. This is



John Covington W4CC

My Background before Amateur Radio

Co-founder of Central Carolina Western Horsemen Association, licensed pilot for over 20 years, licenses as auctioneer, general contractor, pyrotech operator, (explosives and fireworks), private pesticide application, and as a notary, I have been exposed to a wide range of opportunities for interacting with people. Farmed grain crops and tobacco in Wake, Franklin, Nash and Granville Counties. Manager of lumber and moulding departments for Carolina Builders, and co-owner and President of Neuse PlasticsCo., Inc. Retired in 1987.



Roger Allen KD4MYE

My interest in Amateur Radio

I had always wanted to become an Amateur Radio operator, but had never taken time to get a license.

Having heard of a local class in Durham, NC I decided to sign up. On April 14, 1992 I became the proud owner of the callsign, KD4MYE!

My interest in ham radio spread very quickly and I constructed the first amateur radio repeater site in Franklin County; the KD4MYE Repeater System.

Co-founder of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club, and serving as a 3 term president, I have taken part in many nets, operated nets, and am involved in ARES and SKYWARN activities working with Emergency Management in Franklin County.

I have participated in Special Olympics, SET's, Field Days, numerous UHF/VHF Contests, and am a member of SMIRK, (Six Meter International Radio Klub). This involvement has offered numerous outlets for expanding my interest in Ham Radio.

Study books, tapes, and equipment have been made available to interested persons in order to promote the hobby of Amateur Radio. I build my own homebrew equipment like a 6 meter Amp and power supply, often researching information from a collection of old Ham Radio books while relying on the expertise of fellow hams.

I currently hold a General Class License, and am working on upgrading to Advance.



continued on page 6

continued on page 6

JOHN COVINGTON W4CC *continued from page 5*

important because not all people can participate in the statewide nets.

What are the most serious problems in the NC Section?

There is a perception by some that certain parts of our state are not represented or considered important by the Section leadership.

We do not have enough hams performing liaison functions for our nets. A few people are doing most of the work. Our emergency communications capability will be severely limited if we do not have more operators trained and able to perform this function.

What would you do about those problems as SM?

I will continue doing what I have done as ACC - promote regular contact with hams in *all* parts of the state and seek their input. I will recruit section cabinet members from across the state, and occasionally meet with hams in each area.

I will encourage hams across the state, especially newcomers, to become more involved in traffic handling and especially in performing liaison functions.

What is your personal opinion on the new licensing plan and how do you feel it will effect the future of ham radio? Is this a question of quantity vs. quality?

Some simplification of the licensing structure is in order, and I have gone on public record with my opinions on this proposal. The FCC went much farther than I would have in simplifying the license structure. In particular I think that the code speed for the top-level license should be higher than 5 WPM.

However, I think a 5 WPM General is probably the right thing to do today. We need more public service communicators on HF, and this will certainly happen now.

I do not believe the total number of hams will be greatly affected by this. I think the biggest result will be a greater number of hams will have upper-level licenses than do so today.

The new rules mean that convincing others to become proficient in CW will be an act of persuasion rather than one of regulation. We still need people with at least medium-speed CW skills, as much of our traffic handling is still performed on CW (and I do not envision NTS Cycle 4 being successfully implemented using SSB).

I hope that the question pool committee develops new tests that are challenging but fair and relevant. I have long believed that the license structure should not be excessively complicated, but not trivially easy either. After all, the learning process does not end with the earning of a license; it's simply part of the journey. I passed all of the tests many years ago, and I am still learning.

The future of ham radio holds many exciting possibilities regardless of the license structure. The fun things about ham radio will remain. The reasons we operate will still be

there. There will be new adventures and new challenges to keep us interested. I do know that it won't be the end of ham radio, as some have predicted. We have been through numerous licensing changes and survived. We will survive this one too, because Amateur Radio will be an exciting experience no matter what your license class is, as long as you make the most of whatever you have.

What role do you see the SM playing in helping Wake County improve its ARES preparedness?

I should state first that *all* counties of this state are important. The Section Manager must be someone interested in seeing a strong ARES organization in each community in this state.

The Section Manager and Section EC should not be micromanagers of local ARES programs unless there is no EC present. Once appointed, the local EC should decide what kind of outside assistance is needed, if any, and should not hesitate to ask for it.

If the EC decides he needs help from the section level officials, we will assist wherever possible.

Wake County is unique because, in addition to having the normal ARES needs of any community, it is the home of the State EOC. Anyone who serves as EC in Wake County will have to contend with volunteers being pulled in two directions (state vs. local) during disasters and drills. Because of this there should be more communications between the Wake EC and the section officials than might be needed in other counties. ■

ROGER ALLEN KD4MYE *continued from page 5*

Why I am a candidate

Considering the fact that I'm relatively new to Amateur Radio I've found myself, on many occasions, witnessing first hand and listening to comments as to the thought that a few select groups were getting full attention of the current Section Manager, while the majority of the state remained underrepresented. As Section Manager, phone calls will be answered or returned, mail responded to, and I will be accountable to the Section Manager's position by offering all NC Hams fair and unbiased equal representation.

There are many ARRL programs and services that need to be made available to all amateurs. One of the Section Manager's objectives is to appoint a Section Cabinet that represents amateur operators across the state. I offer NC a fresh new sounding board as Section Manager by having an open mind, being reliable and available, and by having the desire and ability to respond to your concerns and needs in a professional manner. ■

SKYWARN CONFERENCE *continued from page 1*

monitor SKYWARN nets and may use information on-the-air if it is urgent.

George Lemons and **Joel Kline** represented the National Weather Service. George outlined the sequence of advisories, watches and warnings. Joel, who has spent several years at the National Hurricane

SWL/Scanner Report

Kelly Mills AE4FG

The January meeting of the Scanner/SWL SIG was held on the 17th at the El Rodeo restaurant on Pleasant Valley Road in Raleigh.

Bob Zeher, KE4ZNR, led a round table discussion of topics for future meetings and outings. Among the possibilities were: a visit to the NC Highway Patrol, planning for a shortwave and scanner monitoring "field day" at an area park this spring, and a visit to the WCPE radio studios.

This was also a show and tell night. Some interesting radios were displayed. Darrell Gammon, KF4URC, brought in a scanner that he bought at a state surplus auction, Bob Zeher brought in an old Meissner kit short-wave receiver that he is restoring, and Kelly Mills displayed a Zenith Universal AM radio made in the 1930s.

There were eleven people attending the meeting, and the meeting broke up about 9:00 PM.

The February meeting will be held on the 21st (third Monday). The meeting topic has yet to be decided, so watch for an announcement in triangle.radio. Join us at 6:30 for a meal at El Rodeo. The meeting will begin at 7:30.

The Scanner/SWL net will be starting in February, so listen for the announcements on the 8:00 RARS 2-meter net.

Everyone is welcome to join the net or our monthly meetings. You don't need to be an amateur radio operator to attend the meetings, so bring your monitoring equipment and questions to share with the group.

For more information, e-mail Bob Zeher (ke4jvy@juno.com) or Kelly Mills (ae4fg@hotmail.com), or call Bob at 844-9757. ■

Board Meeting Minutes

December, 1999

Jeff Wittich AC4ZO

There was no Board meeting this month.

Club Meeting Minutes

January, 2000

Jeff Wittich AC4ZO

Minutes of the Regular January RARS Meeting - January 4, 2000

The regular meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was held on January 4, 1999 at the Forest Hills Baptist Church on Clark Avenue.

The meeting was called to order at 7:31pm by President Jack Ritter, W0UCE. David N4YTO gave the treasurers report. He said membership stands at 263.

Thomas KF4JKQ made an announcement about the first annual Central Carolina Skywarn Conference to be held at the Sheraton Imperial Center at 9:00 am on Saturday January 8. Several television weather people will be there along with others in the field. All hams are invited to attend.

Charlie W4VFJ has been in contact with W5YI, a VEC, and said a few words about how the restructuring effort will effect ham radio examinations. Gary KN4AQ then said a few words about the RARS Spring classes, and the decisions facing the Education Department.

Jack announced that the Rars Librarian, Wes KG4CXT, needs a ride to meeting from Fuquay Varina. Jack W0UCE made a few comments of his own about the restructuring, and this ended the announcements.

The program for the evening was an open discussion led by President Ritter, concerning the direction the club should take in the coming years.

Door prizes went to WB4DRJ, and K4DAM. The meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.

Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO
Secretary

SKYWARN CONFERENCE

continued from page 6

Center in Miami, reviewed the paths that hurricanes have taken through NC over the century, and the types of damage they cause. He exploded some of the myths about hurricanes in the state, and concluded that flooding, not wind, is responsible for the greatest loss of life and property.

Thomas KF4JKQ said the event was a success, and he plans the 2nd Annual conference next year. ■

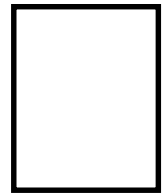
IKON *Digital Print on Demand*
Office Solutions

High quality, high impact graphics and documents in the quantities you need, when you need them, where you need them. IKON Business Document Services, the only truly corporate oriented print center in operation 24 hours, 7 days a week. Call or visit us today at 919.460.7000 or <http://bds.ikon.net>.

RARS Exciter
February 2000 7



Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc.
PO Box 17124
Raleigh, North Carolina 27619



More Pictures from the SKYWARN Conference



Emily Byrd, Chris Thompson, Steve Sweinckowski and Gary McGrady agreed that SKYWARN Hams provide vital information.



WTVD's Gary McGrady, above, said he's been working with SKYWARN for years. NWS hurricane specialist Joel Kline, left, prepares a slide showing that flooding is often more serious than wind.



WRAL's Chris Thompson (left) stays busy talking to David KF4VXJ, James W4CAD, and SKYWARN ECs Bill KB1G and Thomas KF4JKQ, while WNCN's Emily Byrd chats with Bob KF4MMM



George Lemmons tells the group how the NWS works with local media to keep the public informed.





Riley Hollingsworth Speaks at FrostFest

Gary Pearce KN4AQ

Comments by Riley Hollingsworth K4ZDH, the FCC's Special Council for Amateur Radio, are now familiar. We've read about him, what he's said and done, in the magazines since he reestablished an FCC enforcement presence a little over a year ago. So when you see him live, speaking at a hamfest as he did at Richmond in January, he seems familiar. But the impact is much greater.



Riley Hollingsworth K4ZDH speaking to hams at Richmond.

Riley spoke before a standing room only audience, as usual. He said that he couldn't address Restructuring very much, since he's in Enforcement and didn't have much to do with it. His personal opinion: "5 wpm does seem a little low."

For the past 10 years, Riley says, the FCC neglected enforcement in Amateur Radio. It was reinstated only after a powerful letter from the ARRL's chief council, Chris Imlay, caught the attention of the Commissioners. Now, Riley says, "enforcement is here to stay and will continue unabated."

And it might get a bit tougher. As Riley sees it, over the past 10 years, many good hams went "bad" in frustration over the FCC's lack of attention to some trouble spots,

notably 3.950 and 14.313 MHz. Some hams took it on themselves to try to clean up the notorious operation there by jamming and otherwise sinking to the level of the hams they were trying to stop. Some of these hams haven't quit. The FCC has been tolerant for the past year, but time is about up.

On a more positive note, Riley says he is more optimistic about ham radio now than any time in the past year and a half. He was particularly encouraged by ham's operation during last year's hurricanes. He was concerned when he observed reporters monitoring the Hurricane Net. But they heard no trouble, no jamming. Instead, they heard an excellent example of public service communications.

That's good, but it won't be enough. Some hams believe our HF spectrum is not subject to the same kind of commercial pressure that our VHF/UHF spectrum is. That's not true - **international shortwave broadcasting would love to have our HF bands**, and 3rd World countries have their eye on 75 meters. In those countries, government officials hear tapes of the worst of ham radio coming out of America, and wonder if we deserve the space.

That's good, but it won't be enough. Some hams believe our HF spectrum is not subject to the same kind of commercial pressure that our VHF/UHF spectrum is. That's not true - **international shortwave broadcasting would love to have our HF bands**, and 3rd World countries have their eye on 75 meters. In those countries, government officials hear tapes of the worst of ham radio coming out of America, and wonder if we deserve the space.

Why do we have that kind of operation? "Amateur Radio was never supposed to be an audio version of the Jerry Springer Show," Riley says. He compares some of the worst operating to a bad case of road rage, calling it "radio rage." And we can't afford it. "If you're operating and being 'stepped on,' don't engage these people. The best response is no response."

Riley compared Amateur Radio to New York's Central Park - extremely valuable real estate that no one would dare develop... unless it loses it's value to the public.



K4ZDH takes time to talk to hams after his Richmond Hamfest speech.

continued on page 10

HOLLINGSWORTH

continued from page 9

In a Question and Answer session following his talk, Riley was asked what the FCC needed from hams to proceed on a malicious interference complaint. He said he needs to see that the hams have worked on it themselves for a while. Establish a pattern to show that it isn't a one-time situation. Make tape recordings including the date, time and frequency. It helps if the hams can identify a suspect. He may ask you for additional help as a case is built.

And what can hams do to encourage the Commission to keep going on enforcement? Write the commission, write your congressmen, be heard through the ARRL and on your own. File comments on rulemakings. "You have to have one strong voice that represents most of what you do."

Riley is scheduled to speak at the RARSfest on Sunday, April 9th. ■



Bobbie KD4ZW, Cyndi KD4ACW and Bob KG4FIO keep watch on the RARSfest booth at the Richmond Frostfest. We sold some tickets and passed out lots of flyers, trying to boost the attendance at the RARSfest on April 9th.

ARRL Seeks Reconsideration of PRB-1 Petition Denial

W1AW Bulletin

The ARRL wants the FCC to declare that its limited federal preemption policy known as PRB-1 applies to amateurs who live in areas governed by deed restrictions, covenants, CC&Rs, or condominium regulations just as it does to hams regulated solely by local zoning laws.

In a Petition for Reconsideration filed in late December, the League formally asked the FCC to rethink its November decision to dismiss a 1996 ARRL Petition for Rule Making. That petition called on the Commission to expand and clarify the limited federal preemption known as PRB-1.

In November, the FCC said PRB-1 excludes restrictive covenants in private contracts as "outside the reach of our limited preemption," although it strongly encouraged associations of homeowners and private contracting parties to "follow the principle of reasonable accommodation" with respect to Amateur Radio.

In asking the FCC to rethink its November Order, the League said the FCC's disclaimer "is no longer a valid premise" and no longer accurately reflects FCC jurisdiction over private land use regulations.

Since PRB-1 came out in 1985, the ARRL pointed out, the FCC has made it clear that it has Congressional authority to prohibit restrictive covenants that could keep property owners and even renters from installing

antennas to receive TV, satellite and similar signals. The League asserts the same principle applies to Amateur Radio, in which the FCC has said it has a "strong federal interest."

The League called on the FCC to clarify that it intends PRB-1 to apply to private land use regulations "to the extent that it has the jurisdiction to do so." Such an approach, the League said, would leave hams free to negotiate reasonable accommodation provisions with local homeowners' associations just as they do now with governmental land use regulators.

The League also asked the FCC to provide some relief via PRB-1 to protect amateurs from "prohibitive and excessive fees" that localities might impose for permits and fees. "Excessive costs associated with burdensome screening requirements are also often imposed by municipalities seeking a mechanism to preclude amateur antennas notwithstanding the PRB-1 policy," the League said.

The ARRL asked the FCC to at least provide a statement that "excessive costs associated with land use approvals fail the 'reasonable accommodation' and 'minimum practicable restriction' tests of PRB-1."

The League urged the FCC to revise and restate its preemption policy and issue a Notice of Proposed Rule Making "without delay" to amend Part 97 of the rules or to issue an Order clarifying its PRB-1 preemption policy.

A copy of the ARRL's Petition for Reconsideration is available on the ARRL Web site, <http://www.arrl.org>. ■

Raleigh North Carolina Begins a 2 Meter SSB Net

John Aceti N1GMV

N1GMV in Zebulon, NC [FM05] announces a 2 meter ssb net for Eastern North Carolina. Due to increased ownership of radio equipment with 2 meter SSB capability there has been an expressed interest for more activity on 2 meter sideband.

Nets will be informal and will be held on Sunday Evenings at 8:30 PM ET on 144.220 Mhz.

Horizontal Polarization is recommended however, check-ins are expected to be primarily from the RTP area so most stations should be heard regardless of antenna polarization.

All are invited to check-in. Mark you calendar for Sunday Evenings 8:30 PM on 144.220 Mhz.

[John reports that the first net in January was a good success, with 8 checkings. Most stations were local, but a few DX stations checked in, including one from Charleston, South Carolina. John had announced the net on mailing lists and newsgroups across the Internet. Got one of those multiband MF/HF/VHF rigs that's never seen the light of RF above 30 MHz? Plug in a 2-Meter antenna and give it a try! KN4AQ] ■

the RARS PDF **Exciter Extra**

The **Exciter PDF Extra** contains material that wouldn't fit in the printed version of the **Exciter**, which is normally limited by printing and postage costs to 8 pages.

You may also have noticed that the PDF version of the **Exciter** is in full color, on every page. And it costs little to produce and distribute. You might want to print it out on your own inkjet, so you'll have a copy to take with you to the... library. **KN4AQ**

Snapshots



Wake County EC Matt Sickles W2BYV provides talk-in at the SKYWARN conference. The laptop was there to provide real-time APRS monitoring. Ask him about cables.



You're reading the PDF Version of the Exciter. This scene won't be repeated until next week, when we prepare the printed version for mailing by sticking labels and stamps on them. Left to right are Ron KG4FIM, Cyndi KD4ACW, Jeff AC4ZO and Bobbie KD4ZVW. That's **two** pictures of Bobbie in this **Exciter**. Your Editor is going to be hearing about that!

**Check Into the
RARS 8:00 Net
Each Evening
on the 146.64
Repeater**

RARS Exciter PDF Extra 11
• February 2000